

agreement, we have 15 minutes for the discussion of the Burma matter?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are 8½ minutes for debate remaining in morning business followed by 15 minutes for the Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Would it be permissible under the consent agreement for Senator McCain and I to proceed on the 15 minutes on the Burma issue?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator may use that time under morning business.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. McCain, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand that we have about 6 minutes on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. About 5 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. I am going to use those 5 minutes, and then we will be on the Domenici amendment. Then, I will speak a few more minutes, as I have time. I will start by using some time right now.

ENERGY

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I must tell my colleagues that, as chairman of the Energy Committee, I am having a good week for a change. On Monday, Senator CANTWELL came to the floor and sought unanimous consent to bring up one piece of the Energy bill. On Tuesday, the minority leader came to the floor and offered a portion of the Energy bill as an amendment to the Internet tax bill.

We seem to be on a roll. Members know this country has a serious energy problem. They are feeling the political pressure to do something about it. That is good news for this chairman, who has waited so long and worked so hard seeking to develop some sort of political consensus on a broad energy bill.

Fellow Senators, I have never in my 31 years worked on legislation that is so hard to piece together, because every time you have a comprehensive bill, you show it to somebody and they read it in its entirety, they find one piece out of hundreds they cannot support. If I had the wisdom and the time to go to every Senator and let them read it and say what can I take out that would make you happy and have

you go for this bill, I assume that when I was finished, this 900-page authorizing bill would probably end up being just a few sheets of paper.

The truth is that America is crying for a comprehensive energy bill. America is not worried about one Senator's particular concern about one particular aspect. They are worried about the fact we will soon be importing natural gas. We have been using our own natural gas, and now predictions are that we are going to be using foreign natural gas in large quantities very soon.

The consensus that I indicated to you is very hard to achieve. In the last Congress, the House and Senate both passed bills but were unable to resolve their differences in conference. I am not speaking of a few months ago; I mean the last legislative session, the last Congress.

Last year the Senate considered energy legislation for somewhere on the order of 3 months before we were able to pass a bill off the floor. This time we got a conference agreement.

I have been criticized for that conference. Some say we didn't have enough meetings. Some say the meetings were not open to the public. Others say they were not open to the Democratic staff.

Let me tell you, this is good rhetoric, but the truth is we conducted one of the most open conferences that I have been in in almost 32 years in the Senate. We made agreements public as they were reached and at the end, before we circulated the agreement for signature, we held an open meeting and reconsidered all the amendments. When amendments could be agreed to by both bodies, we made changes. That is very different than the way most conferences are conducted. I have asked Senators on both sides of the aisle if they have been involved in bills where they were the minority and they didn't even participate in the conference, and many have said that is almost the course of things as we live in this Senate. Yet we did our best to use the Internet as a new tool. We submitted this to all the press through the Internet. They knew more about this bill if they wanted to report it than anybody has ever known. While doing that, we obviously submitted it to the minority and the minority staff.

I responded to that criticism by dramatically reducing this bill. It is a slimmed-down energy bill. It dramatically reduces the cost for the nontax portions. We have reduced the cost from \$5.4 billion to a minus \$1.3 billion.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

INTERNET TAX NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of S. 150, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 150) to make permanent the moratorium on taxes on Internet access and multiple and discriminatory taxes on electronic commerce imposed by the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

Pending:

McCain amendment No. 3048, in the nature of a substitute.

Daschle amendment No. 3050 (to the language of the bill proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 3048), to eliminate methyl tertiary butyl ether from the United States fuel supply, to increase production and use of renewable fuel, and to increase the Nation's energy independence.

Domenici amendment No. 3051 (to amendment No. 3050), to enhance energy conservation and research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be up to 1 hour of debate only equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I yield myself up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. I hope I don't use all that time. Will the Chair advise me when I have used 10 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will do so.

AMENDMENT NO. 3051

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, we cut the cost by \$6.7 billion. The amendment before us is not subject to a point of order and it can proceed without any concern in that regard.

We have been criticized heretofore because we had an MTBE safe harbor provision. That provided faulty product liability protection for the manufacturers of MTBE. When the conference report was on the Senate floor, I spent a great deal of time defending that position which was insisted upon by the House. I thought that provision was necessary, but because we could not get that provision accepted by the Senate, it is not in this legislation.

I feel very chagrined today to note, while it has not been to my ear where I have heard it, I understand the oil companies and their major lobbying groups are opposing this bill because of MTBE not being in it. I think that is a shortsighted approach. How are they going to get MTBE if we don't get a bill? If we don't get a bill, we stay right where we are, except we don't have an energy bill for America. What we have is no change in the MTBE law, but we do not have an energy bill.

I urge those who are taking that position to assume the reality of things. If they think we are going to change the original bill and get two more votes—remember, in a cloture situation on the original bill, we got 58 votes. I remind those who think we can go back and fix it that it is also subject to seven points of order. Sooner or later, it would have been defeated by a point of order.